

Testimony to request that Aging Services 3 million dollars in the budget remove the one time only designation and add an additional 3 million for the biennium.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Susan Kohler and I am the CEO of Missoula Aging Services; the Area Agency on Aging for Missoula and Ravalli Counties. I am here today representing not only my service area, but as a member of the Montana Area Agency on Aging Association. Our mission is to promote the independence, dignity and health of older adults and those who care for them. We do this through services often contracted through county councils on aging, senior centers, home health agencies, or directly. I have passed out a brochure that lists the variety of services we offer through the Aging Network. For the most part, our services are directed towards older adults whose income is above the Medicaid level but are still in need of subsidized services to remain in their homes.

For the fourth session the Area Agencies on Aging and the Aging Network have had to come to the legislature to ask for \$ 3 million dollars. And, for six years this money has been designated as one-time-only. The reality is this funding is not used for one-time-only purposes but it is used to sustain these programs. This session the Governor has added this funding to the budget however, the one-time-only designation remains. We believe it is time for this designation to be removed and that the 3 million dollars for the biennium be a part of the base budget. In addition, we are no longer able to sustain our current level of services and are respectfully asking for an additional 3 million for the biennium. This would total 6 million dollars to support older adults across Montana who are aging in place and need some support to continue living independently and with dignity.

Last year the Area Agencies on Aging and its network served 58,105 older adults and those that care for them. Although a majority of those we serve are older adults, we also see their adult children who for guidance and support of their parents since they are often working and/or have no idea what services are available. Most families still help to support their aging parents but they don't always live in the same town and if they do, they are trying to juggle their own lives while sincerely doing their best to support their parents.

Our services help people navigate through the complexities of long term care services, provide respite to those caring for an older adult with Alzheimer's or other related dementia, Meals on Wheels, homemaking services, Medicare and Medicaid consultations, education, advocacy, and congregate meals to name a few. We utilize

adults of all ages as volunteers to support the delivery of services and to meet community needs in other important areas such as food banks, veterans' assistance, schools, homelessness and so much more.

It is for this reason that we believe our 3 million dollars needs to be secured in the base budget and an additional 3 million added to address the growing population of older adults in this state. Please remember, Montana will rank 5th per capita of older adults by the year 2025. This cannot be ignored. If we don't provide these services more people will be institutionalized or will quickly spend down to Medicaid and in either scenario will cost the state of Montana much more than the 3 million from the last six years and the 3 million additional funding we are asking for.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for your time and I hope you will give positive consideration to this request.



Congregate meals served at the Belmont Senior Center in Butte provide a social atmosphere and a source of nutrition.

Services provided directly by Montana's Area Agencies on Aging or contracted to our partners include:

- Transportation
- Meals On Wheels
- Medicare and Medicaid education
- Ensuring residents' rights in nursing homes and assisted living facilities
- Congregate meals
- Health promotion
- Personal care
- Respite for family caregivers
- Volunteer opportunities to serve our programs and communities
- Senior Centers

In Fiscal Year 2012, Area Agencies on Aging served 58,105 older adults and those who care for them. By 2025 Montana will be ranked fifth in the nation, per capita, for people over 65.

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Advocating for Montana's Older Adults



"The Aging Advantage"

AAA

Montana Area Agencies on Aging Association

EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1/22/13
HB Senior Long Term Care

The Montana Area Agencies on Aging Association (M4A)

is a nonprofit association consisting of 10 Area Agencies on Aging across the state. M4A exists to provide statewide leadership for Area Agencies on Aging and our partners, including senior centers, County Councils on Aging, home health agencies and others. We provide statewide unity on aging issues including legislative issues impacting our increasing older population, people with disabilities and those who care for them. Our mission is to promote independence and dignity to these people through services, education, advocacy and volunteer opportunities.

M4A's priorities for this state legislature:

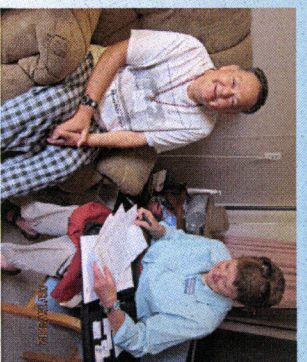
- To provide permanent funding to Area Agencies on Aging instead of the one-time only (OTO) \$3 million appropriated to them during the last six years.
- To provide additional funding which will allow Area Agencies on Aging to meet the current demand for services and address the future needs of the rapidly growing aging population and their families.

"The Aging Advantage"

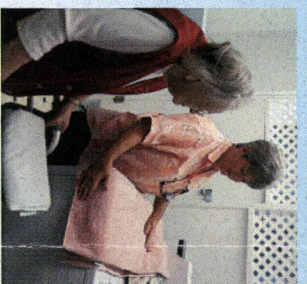
M4A

Montana Area Agencies on Aging Association

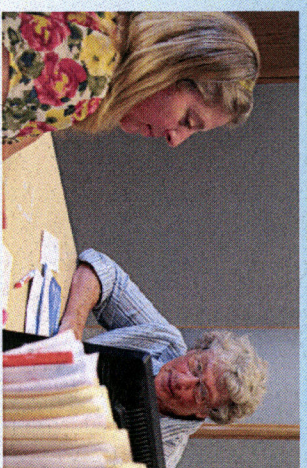
Call 1-800-551-3191



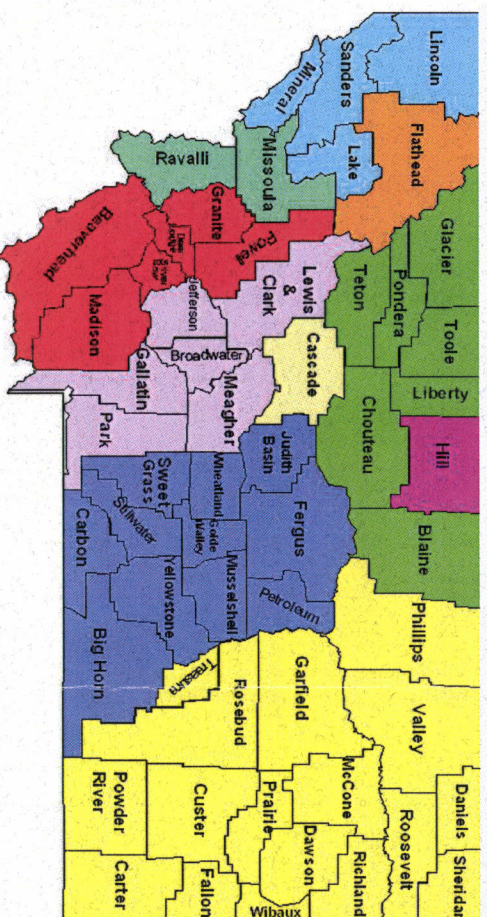
Ombudsman programs



Homemaker services



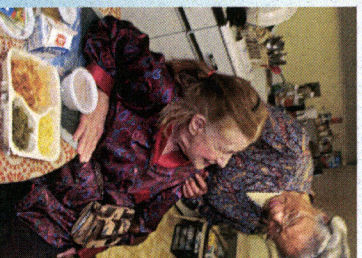
Medicare & Medicaid education & assistance



The Montana Area Agencies on Aging

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| Area I | Area II |
| Area III | Area IV |
| Area V | Area VI |
| Area VIII | Area IX |
| Area X | Area XI |

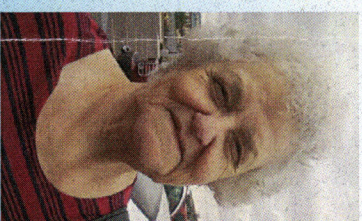
Meals On Wheels



Caregiver support & respite



Senior volunteers



Companionship

